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ABSTRACT

In spite of affirmative action efforts, the percentage of female school administrators has barely risen since 1970. When nearly half of the educational administration students are women who are completing both certification and doctoral programs in record numbers, this seems especially puzzling. As it has become more difficult to blame the shortage of women administrators on their unwillingness to earn the necessary credentials, there has been a shift toward blaming women for not applying for the jobs. While all the studies conducted in the 1970s found that men were much more persistent in their job search efforts, the results of studies done in the 1980s indicate a change in that pattern: women were more likely to be making greater job search efforts than men. Additionally, studies revealed that men are twice as likely as women to be preselected for the position of secondary school principal and women reach this administrative position only after much effort. The only administrative job for which women had to make less effort than men was the position of elementary school principal. Women continue to indicate that they are asked illegal questions during the hiring process. In fact, the women perceived more sex discrimination in hiring in recent years. (16 references) (KM)

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Searching for Female Leaders for America's Schools
Are the Women to Blame?

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Searching for Female Leaders for America's Schools
Are the Women to Blame?

In spite of affirmative action efforts, the percentage of school administrators who are women has barely risen since 1970. This seems especially puzzling when nearly half the educational administration students are women who are completing both certification and doctoral programs in record numbers (Ortiz & Marshall, 1988). As it has become more difficult to blame the lack of female school administrators on women's unwillingness to get the needed credentials, there has been a shift to blaming women for not applying for the jobs. Some research suggests this may be the case (Johnson, Yeahey, & Moore, 1980; Schneider, 1986 and 1988; and Shakeshaft, 1987) while other studies (Hulhorst, 1984 and Pavan 1988) found women making greater job search efforts than men. This investigation examines these studies and others for methodological and reporting differences in order to determine what happens during the recruitment and selection process. This analysis should be useful as educational administrators train and advise students, review their placement procedures, and for school boards developing selection and promotion policies.

Perspective

A considerable body of literature is available which reports on the lack of women school administrators. Jones and Montenegro (1985) give recent national statistics and Pavan (1985) presents data on the availability of a qualified female administrative job pool which shows that women hold a greater percentage of the certificates issued than of the administrative positions in Pennsylvania. During the year 1978-79

when all administrative hiring in Oregon was monitored, the percentage of women hired reflected percentages in the total applicant pool. However, women were hired at the lower levels in staff, not line positions. Lack of administrative experience for women related to not being hired. Schmuck, Charters, and Carlson (1981) wondered what prevents male administrators from encouraging women.

The job search strategies of women aspirants have been surveyed by some researchers, but few have looked at both men and women. Women were more likely to obtain their first administrative position by internal recruitment (42%) than men (26%) in a Wisconsin study of school administrators by Schneider (1986). Both men (88%) and women (86%) indicated being recruited by male administrators. Holders of New Jersey administrative certificates were surveyed (Johnson, Yeakey, Moore, 1980) with a significant difference obtained between the proportion of men (72%) and women (56%) who applied for administrative employment. Interviews were given to 90% of the male and 83% of the female applicants. District encouragement was experienced by 55% of the men and 42% of the women. Holders of educational administration doctorates looking for management positions received an average of one job offer and two job interviews with men needing to make only four applications, but women eighteen (Hullhorst, 1984).

A careful rereading of the studies previously cited plus others mentioned in these reports and some more recent publications reveals that women are accused of taking two rather paradoxical positions. On the one hand rather than seek administrative positions (even though women hold the appropriate certification), it is asserted that women just

wait and say or do nothing until an administrative position is handed to her or she is "tapped" for a position. Yet on the other hand it is reported that women actively apply for administrative positions even though often they receive interviews only so the district can claim the fulfillment of affirmative action procedures due to the interview of a "token" woman.

A number of possible explanations might be suggested to explain this contradiction: time of survey, characteristics of respondents, and the questions asked of them. Surveys reported in this paper cover a span of over 15 years from the early 1970's to 1988 during a time when enormous changes have been documented in the working lives of women. Samples have differed in many ways. Some are non random convenience samples, some are national and some state-wide. In some cases the respondents have administrative certification or are seeking it by enrolling in an introductory class, or may never have expressed an interest in administrative jobs. The studies have respondents with very different jobs; some report on high level administrators while others consist mostly of classroom teachers and supervisors. The job search data gathered varies among studies. Most surveys report all job search activities together, while a few separate the data on first and present administrative job searches. Lastly, it is impossible to know if the experiences of women are the same or different from men's when only women are surveyed.

The following sections trace these two contradictory assumptions as to women's job search efforts: being "tapped" or anointed versus being persistent. Studies are presented in chronological order from earliest to most recent date of survey and include details as to sample and data

differences.

The Persistent (Persevering Despite Obstacles)

One measure of perseverance in seeking administrative jobs is submitting job applications. Shakeshaft (1987, p. 86) repeats a common perception, "Although it is true that women have traditionally applied less often than men for administrative positions and that women, more often than men, need to be encouraged to enter administration,..." without giving a specific reference for this assertion. A review of studies cited suggest that the statement is probably based on the following evidence.

Schmuck reviewed in-district applications for one Oregon urban school district for a four year period in the early 1970's and discovered only 14% were women. Her analysis of principal and assistant principal applications for one school in that district over the same time period showed that men reapplied for administrative positions on an average of three times but women less than one. Using the above as evidence she noted "women typically show less professional perseverance than men" in getting administrative jobs and "women do not apply for administrative positions." She also notes that when a superintendent reflects on female administrative applications "the event was remembered whimsically and not viewed as a serious application." (Schmuck, 1975, pp.66-70) Her thesis includes a number of quotes indicating that both men and women are surprised when they encounter a female school administrator. Although Paddock (1978, p. 13) did not collect additional data on this issue in her survey, she did refer to Schmuck's study previously cited.

Paddock (1980) compared the women administrators she surveyed in 1977 to the results of studies conducted on male administrators between 1965 and 1976 on their job search efforts and reports, "If they [women] do seek an administrative career on an active basis, they generally are not as persistent as men; after one or two attempts to achieve a position they may decide to remain in the classroom; men, on the other hand, try again and again." (p. 3)

Using a sample of men and women certified to hold positions as principals, superintendents, and supervisors from three New Jersey counties representative of urban, suburban and rural areas within the northern, central and southern regions of the state; Johnson, Yeakey, and Moore's 1980 survey had a 52 percent response rate of 241 men and 80 women. Of those who responded affirmatively to a question about making applications for administrative posts; 72% of the men, but only 55% of the women had done so. This significant difference led to the conclusion that "proportionately fewer men than women seek administrative positions."

Hullhorst (1984) obtained lists of men and women who completed their doctorates in educational administration between 1976 and 1980 at 8 mid western universities. In the spring of 1983, she surveyed all the women and a sample of men matched by institution and year of graduation. At the time of the survey 66% of the women and 72% of the men had sought jobs after graduation. In seeking their first job on the average women made 7.7 applications which resulted in 2.8 interviews while men made 9.4 applications and had 2.5 interviews, a statistically insignificant difference. The pattern changes dramatically for the present job with women making 19.8 applications for 2.0 interviews while men needed only 4.2 applications to receive 2.2 interviews. Women used more job seeking techniques

both formal (placement office, applications, advertisements) and informal (doctoral advisor, colleagues, professional contacts) job seeking techniques for both the first job and the present job than the men did.

Women on the Job investigated Long Island, New York school districts to determine why so few women held school administrative positions in the 1982-83 school year. Women job candidates reported sometimes the receipt of their applications was not acknowledged, that they could not get past the paper review and they weren't called for interviews. (Shapiro, 1984).

Data on job search strategies were collected as part of a larger survey conducted in 1985 by Pavan (1988). Responses were received from 622 male and female holders of Pennsylvania school administrative certificate holders. Tables 1 and 2 show the results for the total population. For each position (superintendent, assistant superintendent, secondary principal, and elementary principal) the respondents have been divided by whether incumbent job holders or aspirants and by sex resulting in sixteen sub-populations.

Women spent more months than men looking for their first administrative job (10.2 vs. 7.5), made more applications than men (6.6 vs. 5.1), and had more interviews than men (3.5 vs. 2.3). Women usually learned about administrative openings for their first job from district job postings, by being selected, or from an administrator. Men used these sources to a lesser degree and relied on friends, advertisements, and placement offices more than women. (See Table 3)

Differences between men and women in seeking their present administrative positions were reduced. However, women needed 2.7 interviews and men only 2.0, and there was a tendency for women to submit

more applications than men (8.8 vs. 5.6).

Gender differences were noted on 6 of the 16 job search strategies. Women were more likely than men to have received informal and formal career counseling and to practice answers to stress interview questions. A greater percentage of men than women applied for out-of-district jobs or jobs requiring a relocation of residence and registered for placement services.

Analysis was also performed on certificate groups (4) and by gender (2) and by aspirant-incumbent status (2) which resulted in 16 sub groups. Mention will be made of the greatest discrepancies between groups where statistical significance was obtained.

The data on months searching, number of applications and interviews for first and present administrative jobs provided some cases where the numbers were unusually high for certain groups. Incumbent female superintendents submitted 19 applications for their present job while the mean was 6. Aspiring female secondary principals had searched 16 months for their first administrative job while the mean was 8. However, except for the incumbent males, those in the assistant superintendent groups had the most difficulty . Aspiring assistant superintendents searched 15 to 20 months, submitted 14 to 15 applications, and had 5 to 8 interviews, but the means were 8, 6, and 3 for first administrative jobs. About 6 applications were submitted for the present administrative jobs, but aspiring male assistant superintendents submitted 19 and their female counterparts none.

District job postings were most likely to be the source of information about the first administrative job opening. Male secondary

principal aspirants relied more on friends and incumbents on being selected while male incumbent superintendents found placement offices a better source. While selection was also common for female assistant superintendents, the male aspirants relied heavily on advertisments for their first jobs.

The most commonly used source of job openings for the present administrative position was different for many groups. Incumbent superintendents used advertisements, while the aspirants were selected as were the incumbent assistant superintendents. Elementary principals were selected or responded to district job postings. While male incumbent secondary principals were selected, the females responded to job postings.

Elementary principal certificate holders, regardless of gender or incumbent - aspirant status, made the least efforts to find a job. The majority of these groups used only 2 job search strategies, up to date resumes and in district applications, while even fewer of the aspiring female group did so. Secondary principal certificate holders used one additional strategy, recommendation letters on file. However, the aspiring female secondary principals increased their efforts by informing administrator superiors, applying for out of district positions, and obtaining informal career counseling.

Only 4 job search strategies were used by over 50% of the aspiring male superintendents: resume, letters, in and out of district applications. The majority of all other assistant superintendent and superintendent groups used between 6 and 9 job search strategies with the exception of the female incumbent superintendents who used 13. Incumbents were more likely to develop individual application letters,

research district before the interview, and make residence relocation applications while aspirants interviewed to gain experience. As was noted above, the female incumbent superintendents tried practically every strategy on the list. In order to obtain their present superintendencies they had searched 8 months (X=5.37) and submitted nearly 19 applications (X=6.25), used advertisements to learn about available positions, and employed 13 different search strategies. No other group put forward half as much effort as the female incumbent superintendents.

Schneider (1986) surveyed all women in Wisconsin holding the following positions: superintendent, assistant superintendent, and principal or assistant principal of a junior, middle or secondary school. A random sample of 50 female elementary principals was included and the same number of male administrators were randomly selected for each position. The responding sample of 182 was 12% central office, 21% secondary principals, 29% elementary principals, and 33% assistant principals. In this sample of male and female administrators no significant gender difference existed in learning about the existence of their first administrative position (advertisements, district posting, local or out-of-district recruitment.)

A different survey in Wisconsin was confined solely to women with administrative certification or degrees in educational administration by Schneider (1988) with 44% of the respondents holding line - administrative positions. In-district applications had been submitted by 126 women (61%) which resulted in 91 being interviewed while external applications by 78 women (44%) resulted in 57 being interviewed (28%). The majority of these positions were on the elementary level with curricular positions the second most sought after.

The Anointed (Selected Without Applying)

In a summary of research on the career paths of women administrators Shakeshaft (1987, p. 67) notes, "If the woman seeks a position on her own, rather than being tapped for it, and she doesn't get it, she'll try only once or twice and then cease pursuing administration." The previous section which reviewed those citations used by Shakeshaft and some more recent work casts some doubt on the notion that many qualified women do not actively seek administrative positions. This section will look at those few studies which tried to determine when administrators were hired without making formal applications for the job.

Schmuck (1975, p. 34) found that 14 out of the 30 women administrators she interviewed had not sought their jobs, but were persuaded to take them. One woman said:

> Someone encouraged me. You must tap a woman on the back. Men are knocking on the door for administrative positions but women who could do the job, say "Oh, no. Not me!" It's a way of life with us. We have been indoctrinated to think we are not as good as men.

These women in the early 1970's were reflecting the culture of their time. They were not geographically mobile as only 4 of the 30 had served in more than one school district while all 10 men had.

Paddock (1980, p. 3) found that women's first managerial responsibilities may be those that are thrust upon them rather those they have sought out and pursued. Encouragement seemed to be more important to the women she surveyed (1978) than was reported in earlier studies on male administrators.

Johnson, Yeakey, and Moore (1980) did not ask their credentialed respondents about this "being tapped" process yet data in their report provide evidence for this discussion. While 158 men made applications for administrative jobs, 184 received appointments; therefore 26 of the total male sample of 241 or 11% received appointments without making application. Out of a female sample of 80, 39 made applications and 48 received appointments, therefore 9 or 11% received appointments without making application. In this study the same proportions of men and women were "tapped" for administrative jobs.

Hullhorst (1984) included "did nothing and was offered a job" on her survey list of job search strategies used by those who received doctorates in educational administration between 1976 to 1980. This was checked by 8.2% of the women and 3.1% of the men for their first job. Responses for their present job showed an even greater variance (women = 24.4%, men = 6.5%) with women clearly more likely to be selected.

Several cases on Long Island are described by Shapiro (1984) where the practice of limiting higher level administrative positions to existing administrators (nearly all male) and the usage of consultants (nearly all male) for superintendent searches leads to the selection of men and exclusion of women. She notes that enforcement of Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 has not focused on hiring discrimination.

Holders of administrative certificates reported to Pavan (1988) that they found their first administrative job by being selected (18%) with 15% of the men and 23% of the women being selected. The percentage selected for their present administrative job was 23% (men = 22%, women = 30%). There were a few exceptions to this pattern of a larger proportion of women than men being selected. The percentage of males and females

chosen to be assistant superintendents was the same (27%). Men were twice (31%) as likely as women (15%) to receive a secondary principal position without actively seeking it. To a lesser degree this held for their first administrative job which probably was an assistant principal job.

Somewhat similiar to "being tapped" is an affirmative response to the internal/local recruitment by an administrator item on Schneider's 1986 survey instrument. Responses to this item were significantly different for women (41.4%) and men (4.5%) on the elementary level but not for the total population.

Bowles (1989) suggested reasons for an anticipated shortage of educational leadership in Wisconsin based on a state wide task force report. The third reads, "decision makers are unable or unwilling to tap women and minorities as a reservoir of potential leadership for elementary and secondary schools... The problem is not a lack of available talent, willingness to make financial sacrifices, or career commitment among women." While not suggesting that women wait to be selected in this usage of the word tap, it is clear from the statistics presented that certified women are not being hired in Wisconsin as readily as men are.

Conclusions

All the studies conducted in the 1970's (Schmuck, Paddock, and Johnson, Yeakey, and Moore) found that men were much more persistent in their job search efforts than the women. The pattern changes in the 1980's when women are likely to be making greater (Pavan, Hullhorst) or similiar efforts (Schneider). While Schneider's administrators in Wisconsin showed

no gender differences in job search effort, Pavan's Pennsylvania certificate holders and Hullhorst's mid-western educational administration Ed.D's and Ph.D's reported greater job search efforts by women. Pavan's study, the most detailed report, notes women spent more months looking, made more applications, and had more interviews than men in both job searches for their first and their present administrative jobs.

No such clear cut parttern emerges from the "anointed" (selected without application) or "being tapped" studies. Only Shapiro (1984) indicates that men are more likely to be selected or have jobs custom-fitted for them and she presents anecdotal data, but no statistics. The other studies indicate women are more likely to be tapped than men although calculations from data in Johnson, Yeahey, and Moore (1980) revealed no gender differences and Schneider (1986) found gender differences favoring selection of women only for the elementary principal position. Pavan (1988) found tapping of men twice as great as women for the position of secondary principal and no gender difference for the assistant superintendency. The "pre-selection" process appears to be related to the specific administrative position. Additional research is needed here with detailed questions carefully written and reported.

The patterns for administrative hiring in Pavan's (1988) data collected in 1985 are fairly clear. Women are required to make much more intensive search efforts than men to obtain a superintendency. While women needed to make stronger job search efforts than men for the assistant superintendency, over ½ of both groups were pre-selected for that position. Men are twice as likely as women to be pre-selected for the position of secondary school principal and this position is reached by women only after much effort. The only position for which women had to make less effort than

men was to obtain the position of elementary school principal.

Discussion

Are the women to blame? Well, yes and NO. Women are probably making more job search efforts than their male counterparts in the 1980's. Even though women are often pre-selected for a given administrative position so are men and this process probably accounts for less than 20% of the administrative hiring.

Those who do the research on gender equity are predominantly women, although research conducted before 1972 on administrative careers were studies of men by men. Female researchers may be contributing to the continuing stereotype of women as passively waiting to be mentored into administration and unwilling to make reasonable search efforts because they briefly summarize research studies conducted well over ten years ago without noting the date and type of respondents. When this research summary is reported with the new publication date, it appears that the behavior reported is still the dominant behavior.

Women continue to indicate that they are asked illegal questions during the hiring process such as how their husbands feel about their administrative job or how they will take care of their children. Edson (1988) gives many examples from her 1979-1980 and her 1984-1985 survey of the same women. In fact, the women felt there was more sex discrimination in hiring in the recent years than earlier. This might reflect that they have become more aware of disequity or that they are seeking higher level administrative jobs. I remember that in 1972 when seeking my first administrative post after completing my doctorate that I would always be sure to mention the ages of my children (18 and 19) in order to avoid these

questions. However, in nearly every interview, and always for a central office position the issue of "being a woman" would come up. We've never had a woman in this position before and we're not sure how it would work." I would begin to imagine music rising in the background, I'd take a deep breath, and calmly try to explain that I had the qualifications for the job in question. Certified women in Pennsylvania and New Jersey tell me stories like these even now after over a decade of public awareness of the illegality of sex discrimination in hiring.

Shakeshaft documents that awareness is not enough. She found that superintendents in New York indicated no gender preference for the hypothetical job of secondary principal, yet at the same time 92.3% of their real openings for secondary principals were filled by men and only 4.5% of the final interview candidates were women. This is especially surprising since over 50% of the administrative certification students in New York are women. (Shakeshaft, 1987, 101-102).

We need to continue to conduct and disseminate gender comparative research in the 1990's until the image of women as reluctant administrators more concerned about family than careers changes in the eyes of those who recruit, hire, and promote: the mostly male superintendents, school boards, and "head hunters." Studies of women only which report on women's actions such as job search activities cannot assume that men would make more effort (or less). While these studies are useful to describe women's efforts, they do not provide data to imply that men do more.

In order to accurately reflect the current state of gender disequity in the hiring process, we need to monitor what is happening to both men and women. We need to continue to conduct gender comparative studies (even while asserting the very positive attributes which women bring to

schools) until that time when the male:female ratio of school administrators reflects the gender ratio of the certification job pool. Until that time those women who like myself train people for school administration will probably continue to need to support "the persistent" women in their intensive job search efforts while many male students are "anointed."

No, the women are NOT to blame for gender hiring discrimination!

Table 1 - Job Search Variables

Variable	Mean of all respondents	
	First	Present
Months searching	8.36	5.37
Number of applications	5.54	6.25
Number of interviews	2.68	2.16

Sources of Information About Administrative Job Openings

	% of all respondents	
	First	Present
District Job Posting	30.7%	24.7
Selected	17.7	23.4
Administrative Superior	14.8	14.9
Advertisement	13.2	17.6
Friend	10.4	10.5
Placement Office	9.9	5.4
Professor	2.2	0
Family	.7	0
School Board Member	.4	2.4

Table 2 - Job Search Strategies

Rank		%
1.	Up-to-date written resume	69
2.	In district application	64
3.	Recommendation letters on file	60
4.	Out of district application	56
5.	Informal career counseling/friends, colleagues	47
6.	Placement service registration	43
7.	Individual application letters	40
8.	Administrators informed/job search	38
9.	Research district before interview	36
10.	Interviewed for experience	35
11.	Residence relocation applications	32
12.	Interview practice - stress questions	29
13.	Letter after interview	24
14.	Career plan with time targets	20
15.	Formal career counseling/advisor, agency	15
16.	Critique of resume, job search plan, etc.	14

Table 3 - Gender Differences

	Months Looking for Job		Number Job Applications		Number Job Interviews	
	First	Now	First	Now	First	Now
Women	10.2	5.8	6.6	8.8	3.5	2.7
Men	7.5	5.2	5.1	5.6	2.3	2.0
F=	1.94	1.10	2.7	1.45	8.50	3.57
P=	.000	.650	.000	.080	.000	.000

Source of Information - First Job About Job Openings

	% Female	% Male
Placement	7	11
Advertisement	8	16
Selected	23	15
Administrator	17	14
Friend	5	13
District Posting	38	27

Chi square= 25.98251, p= .0011

Job Search Strategy

	% of group Women	Men	chi square	P
5 - Informal career counseling	53	43	6.46606	.0110
15 - Formal career counseling	19	12	5.25497	.0219
6 - Registered placement service	35	48	9.66648	.0019
12 - Interview practice-stress questions	39	22	19.50676	.0000
4 - Out of district applications	49	60	6.76015	.0093
11 - Relocation applications	24	37	10.83531	.0010

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